

Guidelines for ISAC Workshop Organizers & Facilitators

The CYTO workshop committee is requesting that workshop organizers prepare their workshops geared toward an active-learning format. The goal is to create an **interactive forum in which to discuss cytometry-related problems and work toward consensus solutions**. We therefore strongly recommend that *formal presentations should constitute at most 20-30 minutes of the 60 minute workshop*. The majority of the workshop should be spent on identification of outstanding questions that prevent lack of consensus, generating ideas for how to reach consensus, problem solving, or other advancements related to the workshop topic. For these discussion points, workshop participants should be the major contributors.

Utilization of a GAP analysis format for the workshop can help guide this process. A GAP analysis identifies the current state of the field, the desired future state of the field, and identifies mechanisms to bridge the gap between the current state and the desired state.

A summary slide listing the three steps of a GAP analysis is attached, and can be used in your workshop to introduce this concept to the participants. A short (5 slides or so) presentation could be made to frame the workshop topic with an outline of relevant history and/or current trends. The workshop can then proceed with active audience participation. A title slide corresponding to each of the Gap Analysis steps can be projected and filled out live during the workshop with participant input.

Key “To Dos” for a successful workshop are summarized below.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

1. Define the goal and key questions (Organizer).

What are the purposes of the workshop? Write out a clear goal and key questions to be addressed by the end of the workshop.

2. Identify a co-chair and determine who will act as Facilitator (Organizer).

The facilitator is responsible for helping the group move through the agenda in a fashion that allows everyone to be heard, keeps the focus on key gaps and questions, and identifies consensus or action items needed to reach consensus. If utilizing the live completion of GAP analysis slides, decide whether the facilitator or the organizer will focus on capturing participant input on the GAP slide.

3. Draft an agenda (Organizer, with input from Facilitator).

Estimate the number of minutes each agenda item will take and assign a starting time for each. Be sure you leave time to summarize 5 minutes prior to the end.

If possible, publish the agenda in advance so that participants can come prepared. If that’s not possible, have copies of the agenda available at the door for everyone to pick up as they come in.

DURING THE WORKSHOP

4. Keep the discussion on track (Facilitator, with backup from Organizer).

State the purpose, the agenda and ground rules for the workshop. Effective facilitators draw out opinions and ideas, keep the focus on HOW and WHAT, find ways to include all participants in the discussion, and do not promote any particular point of view.

Honor time limits, but be sensitive to the need for discussion. Allow the group to talk things through. If they want more time to discuss an issue, adjust the agenda. Recognize when there is consensus and move on.

5. Promote participation and group discussion (Facilitator, with backup from Organizer).

Plan a question or activity early in the meeting where each person is asked to contribute in turn. This establishes your intention to encourage participation and gets everyone over any initial hesitancy to speak UP. One way to do this is to ask each person to state their most important concern for inclusion in the Gap Analysis (Goal/Future State, Current State, Next Steps/Action Items; see page 3).

Every meeting has both outgoing people who are willing to contribute without being prodded and introverted types who don't chime in unless called upon to do so or until they've had a chance to absorb and examine the information. The facilitator's job is to ensure that no single person dominates the conversation and that the quiet members get called upon to contribute. Simply saying, "I'd like to hear from [*the quiet person*] on [*the subject at hand*]" can accomplish both purposes.

6. Conclude the session (Organizer, with assistance of Facilitator)

Do not allow the session to go over time. You should have taken some summary notes. Stopping discussion 5 minutes prior to the allotted time limit will allow you to restate the important issues and recap conclusions and action items. **Don't editorialize** – you should be reporting on the discussion. Conclude by thanking the participants.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

7. Follow Up (Organizer, with input from Facilitator).

Communicate the group's decisions to those who are affected so that decisions can be put into action. A set of 3 slides summarizing each of the Gap Analysis topics is one very effective way to do this.

Thanks in advance for doing the work to make the CYTO Workshops of value to the entire cytometry community as well as to the in-person participants!

Gap Analysis

1. Future state:
[What is (are) the desired end goal(s)?]
2. Current Situation:
*[What is the current status of the problem?
What limitations are preventing us from
reaching the goal(s)?]*
3. Next Steps/Action Items:
*[What do we need to do to bridge the gap
and move toward the goal(s)?]*